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## Pirates Hang Tough With No. 1, Fall 62-55 To Jaguars

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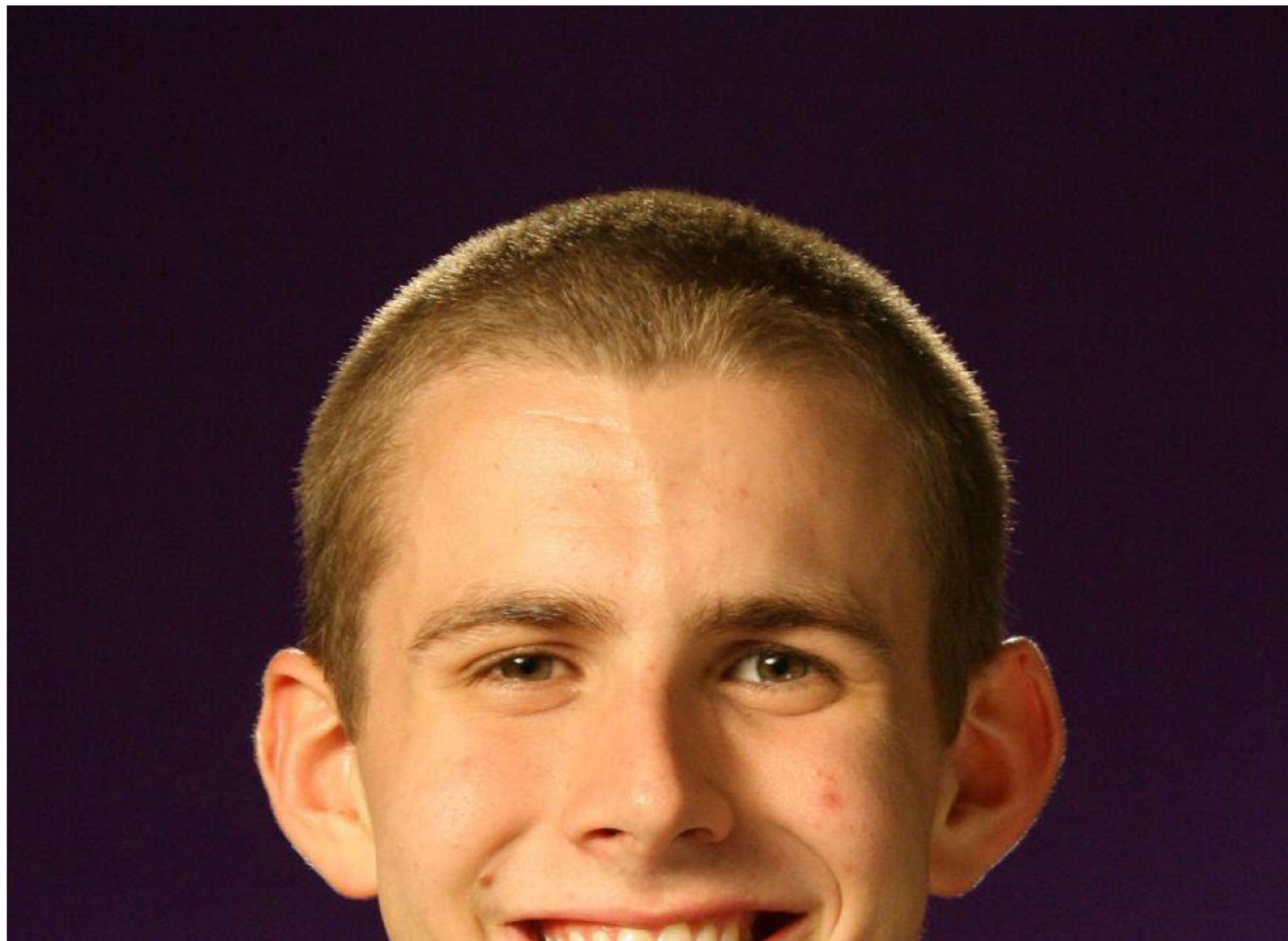
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### Pirates Hang Tough With No. 1, Fall 62-55 To Jaguars





Posted: Jan 13, 2010

**SAVANNAH, Ga.** - Top-ranked Augusta State University scored the first 13 points of the second half, erasing a one-point deficit and coming away with a 62-55 Peach Belt Conference victory over host Armstrong Atlantic on Wednesday evening, the Pirates' first-ever meeting with a top-ranked team at Alumni Arena.

Just 24 hours after the Jaguars (14-0, 6-0 PBC) became the first-ever Peach Belt Conference team to earn a No. 1 ranking in men's basketball, the Pirates (5-8, 0-4 PBC) held a one-point halftime lead, 23-22, after forcing Augusta State into just 32 percent shooting from the field and seven turnovers.

As the second half began, however, Augusta State got three-pointers from Ben Madgen and Daniel Dixon in a 13-0 run to begin the half, and extended that lead out to 14 points, 39-25, on a pair of Dixon free throws.

The Pirates kept it at a 10 point lead or less for much of the second half after that and got as close as six points with a Gabriel Robinson layup with 20 seconds left, but Fred Brathwaite got free out of the full-court press and converted a dunk that put the Jaguars back up by eight and sealed the victory.

The Jaguars were the highest-ranked team to face the Pirates at Alumni Arena since the building opened in 1995. AASU had knocked off then-No. 2 Clayton State in 2007 in the Pirates' previous highest-ranked matchup to tonight.

Brathwaite led all scorers on the night for the Jaguars with 17 points on 6-of-13 shooting, including 2-of-2 three-pointers, despite suffering through a 3-for-11 night at the free throw line. Madgen added 13 points and Dixon chipped in 11 for Augusta State.

Freshman **David Pruett** led the Pirates with a season-high 16 points on 4-of-6 shooting from the floor, including 2-of-4 three-pointers, as well as 6-of-7 from the free throw line. Senior Patrick Shokpeka added 14 points and Chris Vanlandingham notched a career-high 10 rebounds.

The 62 points for Augusta State were a season-low on the year, eclipsing the 68 they scored at Benedict in an early-season win. The seven-point victory was also the closest margin of victory the Jaguars have had this year.

The Pirates return to action on Saturday, January 16, facing GCSU at 3:30 p.m. at Alumni Arena.

#### **Head Coach Jeremy Luther's Post Game Comments:**

On the 13-0 run in the second half: "We missed some big shots, some real good looks at the beginning of the half. We only had five turnovers in the entire first half, but I think we probably had four in the first several minutes in the second half."

On this meeting compared to the first meeting, an 81-52 loss at Augusta: "The first time we played, they hit is good early, and some of our kids quit. We had a team meeting afterwards and I told them that they've got to continue competing for the full 40 minutes. Since then, we've gotten better at our trap zone, and at halftime I looked and it was the first time this year we were even with the other team in rebounding."

On the effort tonight against No. 1 ASU: "Our kids fought through. They did it tonight from tip to finish. Augusta is older, more experienced and has more wins, but I'm proud of the kids tonight. They really battled."



## **ARMSTRONG STATE UNIVERSITY**

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